

Abstract. This article examines official Norwegian language courses that are currently being offered to immigrants arriving in Norway. Such courses have in recent years been made available on a large scale, due to the significant increase of immigration to the country. The article will give an account of how such courses are organized, what groups of immigrants they are aimed at, and how these courses are regulated by law. Furthermore, it will describe the actual users of the courses, the results they achieve and how these results correlate to such factors as for instance national background, linguistic habits and overall motivation. The parts of the article dealing with such topics are based on a survey carried out among participants in a selection of randomly chosen courses over a couple of months in 2011. In order to better describe the strengths and weaknesses of the Norwegian approach to organizing language courses for immigrants, the data from the survey is supplemented with information from the Vox database. This is a publicly accessible database provided by the Norwegian Agency for Lifelong Learning, an agency of the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, consisting of both basic information about participants of language course and their results. The results from a survey done on teachers who are in charge of courses are also demonstrated. After presenting and discussing information drawn from this database and our own study, the Norwegian way of organizing official language courses is briefly discussed and compared to the way such challenges are met in Lithuania. The overall aim of this is to extract knowledge from the experiences gained by the Norwegians while implementing official language courses for adult immigrants.

The type of language learning that these courses provide is to a certain extent in demand in most countries, and the connection between local language skills and good integration is a well-established scientific fact. As a consequence, the experiences gained in this field in Norway might be of interest in most countries faced with immigration and the challenge of integrating immigrants successfully into society. Such countries could also be said to include Lithuania.